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Letter dated 28 June 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith an assessment of the work of the Security Council for the month of December 2017 during the presidency of Japan (see annex). The document was prepared under my own responsibility, following consultations with other members of the Council.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Koro **Bessho**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations

18-10788 (E) 120718

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Annex to the letter dated 28 June 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Japan (December 2017)

Introduction

During the month of December 2017, under the presidency of Japan, the Security Council held 30 public meetings, 2 closed meetings and 11 consultations of the whole. The Council adopted nine resolutions and four presidential statements and issued eight press statements.

Africa

Central African region

On 13 December, the Security Council held a briefing followed by closed consultations of the whole on the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). In the open Chamber, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, François Louncény Fall, introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of UNOCA (S/2017/995). He highlighted the support of the United Nations for various initiatives in the region, including the Central African Economic and Monetary Community zone, and enhancing collaboration between UNOCA and the Economic Community of Central African States. He summarized the difficulties facing various countries in the region and urged inclusive dialogue, adherence to rule of law and economic development, as well as more international support for efforts to address the threat of Boko Haram. He also encouraged support for the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army in the light of the increased security vacuum following the withdrawal of forces of Uganda and the United States of America from the zone.

At the consultations, the Security Council expressed its appreciation for the engagement of UNOCA and reaffirmed its support for the efforts of the Special Representative, through his good offices, to prevent conflict and consolidate peace and stability in the region. The Council expressed concerns about the situation in some countries in the region, the continuing transitional threat of the Lord's Resistance Army and the terrorist activities perpetrated by Boko Haram. It looked forward to the Special Representative's efforts in the following reporting period through his good offices and preventive diplomacy, including efforts to address the fragile situation in the Central African Republic and the terrorist activities perpetrated by Boko Haram, as well as the situations of individual countries.

Central African Republic

On 4 December, the Security Council issued a press statement on the Central African Republic, condemning in the strongest terms the attack on a detachment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic in Bria. The members of the Council also expressed their deepest condolences and sympathy to the family of a Mauritanian peacekeeper who had been killed and wished a speedy recovery to two Mauritanian peacekeepers and one Zambian peacekeeper who had been injured.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

A brutal attack against the company operating base of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo at Semuliki, North Kivu, on 7 December led the Security Council to issue a press statement following its closed consultations of the whole on 8 December. In its condemnation, the Council reiterated that such attacks might constitute war crimes under international law and called upon the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to ensure that the perpetrators were swiftly brought to justice. The Council expressed its deepest condolences and sympathy to the families of the 15 Tanzanian peacekeepers and 5 members of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo who had died and a speedy recovery to the those who had been injured (at least 53). The Council also held a moment of silence for the peacekeepers ahead of its meeting on a different item on 8 December.

Great Lakes region

On 8 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2389 (2017). In the resolution, the Council took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region, reaffirming that it remained an essential mechanism to achieving durable peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region. The Council called upon all signatory States, especially the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to redouble their efforts in order to fully and promptly implement their commitments in good faith, including the commitment not to interfere in the internal affairs of neighbouring countries. It stressed the need to deepen cooperation among the guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, namely, the United Nations, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Southern African Development Community, and the core signatory countries of the Framework. The Secretary-General was invited to assess the progress, challenges and shortcomings in the implementation of the Framework and to present his vision, supported by concrete recommendations, to the Council in his next report.

Liberia

The Security Council held consultations of the whole on the situation in Liberia on 13 December. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Liberia and Head of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Farid Zarif, gave a briefing to the Council members on the recent developments in the elections in Liberia and the outlook for the second round of the presidential election. He also briefed the Council on the drawdown of UNMIL towards its final withdrawal. Council members commended the peaceful conduct of the elections in October and the use of established legal mechanisms to address subsequent complaints. Council members emphasized the importance of the timely completion of the electoral process and a peaceful transition of power within the constitutional timelines, and called upon the Liberian authorities to ensure a credible and peaceful second round of the presidential election, including through the full participation of women. Members expressed their support and appreciation for the important role played by the Special Representative and UNMIL towards a peaceful transition and their hope for the orderly drawdown of the Mission. Recognizing the need to further consolidate current peacebuilding efforts in Liberia, members stressed the importance of the continued support of international partners to that end.

Libya

On 14 December, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2017/26) to emphasize the continuity of the Libyan Political Agreement of 17 December 2015 throughout the country's transitional period, reiterating that the Agreement remained the only viable framework to end the Libyan political crisis. The Council also reaffirmed its endorsement of the United Nations action plan for an inclusive Libyan-owned political process and looked forward to its further implementation, including preparation for elections. The Council underscored that Libyans should decide their own future without foreign interference.

Peace and security in Africa

On 8 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2391 (2017), by which it requested the Secretary-General to take appropriate steps to conclude a technical agreement among the United Nations, the European Union and States of the Group of Five for the Sahel, with a view to providing specified operational and logistical support through the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali to the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. The representatives of China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Sweden, the United States and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland made statements after the vote.

Under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the representatives of Mali and Mauritania were invited to participate in the meeting.

Somalia

On 6 December, the Security Council issued a press statement welcoming the successful conclusion of the Somalia Security Conference and the inaugural Somalia Partnership Forum, held in Mogadishu on 4 and 5 December, as well as the continued commitments by all parties to build upon the progress in Somalia since 2012. Members underlined the need to implement the national strategy and action plan of Somalia for preventing and countering violent extremism and to further develop the political settlement. They also urged continued international humanitarian response.

South Sudan

A meeting with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was held on 6 December. The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Bintou Keita, conducted a briefing.

The Security Council held a briefing and consultations of the whole on 7 December. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, briefed the Council on key developments and challenges in 2017, as well as the efforts of UNMISS to be more robust, nimble and proactive ahead of the imminent dry season. He drew the Council's attention to the uptick in conflict in 2017 in the greater Upper Nile, the Equatorias and Western Bahr el-Ghazal, with a huge impact on the humanitarian situation. In the light thereof, the Under-Secretary-General welcomed the increased regional efforts, in particular the work towards the high-level revitalization forum led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, gave a briefing on the deteriorating humanitarian situation. He reported that more than 2 million people had fled South Sudan, almost two thirds of the remaining population in the country still needed humanitarian assistance, about 1.9 million people were internally displaced and 210,000 people were in the protection of civilian sites at UNMISS bases. Stressing the continued need

for United Nations humanitarian assistance, the Under-Secretary-General called for the Republican Order issued by the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, for the free, unimpeded and unhindered movement of humanitarian assistance convoys to be fully implemented at all levels and by all parties.

The Special Envoy of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development for South Sudan, Ismail Wais, detailed the past few months of preparations for the high-level revitalization forum of the parties to the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. He emphasized that consultations had taken place with all parties, resulting in 48 submissions on how to proceed. The Special Envoy listed factors that he believed would influence the forum's success, such as inclusivity, the cessation of hostilities and a permanent ceasefire, political will, the unified position of the opposition, gender parity and the participation of women, the participation of Riek Machar, the coordination of concurrent political initiatives and wider consultations and transparency.

The representative of South Sudan stressed the commitment of the Transitional Government of National Unity to the forum. He also welcomed the holding of the consultations with the team for the review of the mandate of UNMISS.

On 14 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2392 (2017) to extend the mandate of UNMISS until 15 March 2018. On the same day, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2017/25) in which, while stressing its continuing deep concern at the situation in South Sudan, it emphasized its strong support for the high-level revitalization forum of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and urged all parties to engage constructively in the process. The Council also called upon all parties to end hostilities and agree to monitored. effective and durable security arrangements to stop the conflict, and to take specific steps to improve the human rights and humanitarian situation, including by ensuring safe and unhindered access for humanitarian actors.

Sudan

On 7 December, the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations, as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan, gave a briefing to the Security Council on the work of the Committee, including the holding of the first joint informal consultations by the Committee with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2206 (2015) concerning South Sudan.

On 12 December, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Fatou Bensouda, briefed the Security Council on the situation in Darfur, pursuant to resolution 1593 (2005). The Prosecutor expressed concern that arrest warrants were not being executed, even by States parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and regret with regard to the repeated inaction on the part of the Council. She called upon the Council to prioritize action on the outstanding warrants of arrest. She noted the refusal by the Sudan to cooperate with the International Criminal Court and invited the Sudan to rethink that position.

Some Security Council members expressed their support for the work of the International Criminal Court and called upon the Government of the Sudan to meet its obligations under resolution 1593 (2005) to cooperate fully with the Court and execute outstanding arrest warrants. Some members also asserted that the Council should take measures in that regard. Others expressed the view that resolution 1593 (2005) did not change norms of international law on immunity for senior officials of States that were not parties to the Rome Statute and reiterated the call by the African Union for the suspension of proceedings against the President of the Sudan, Omer

Al-Bashir. The representative of the Sudan also took the floor under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

Asia

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

On 11 December, the Security Council held a meeting on the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The agenda of the meeting was adopted after a procedural vote, with 10 votes in favour, 3 votes against and 2 abstentions.

At that meeting, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Miroslav Jenča, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, briefed the Security Council on the humanitarian and human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea during 2017, noting the lack of progress, and expressed their concerns and observations.

In statements before and after the procedural vote, some Security Council members objected to the meeting on the grounds that human rights did not fall under the mandate of the Council. They stated that the primary responsibility of the Council was the maintenance of international peace and security and therefore the Council was not the appropriate forum for debating human rights issues and should not allow human rights issues to be politicized. Some members of the Council stressed that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had been diverting its resources into pursuing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles over the welfare of its people and the human rights situation in the country was therefore closely linked with international peace and security, which was within the Council's mandate. Some delegations also voiced concern about the treatment of prisoners and detainees in the country and the welfare of the abducted Japanese citizens. In accordance with rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, the delegation of the Republic of Korea made a statement.

Myanmar

On 12 December, the Security Council held a briefing at which the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, gave briefings. The Under-Secretary-General said that, although the violence had subsided, new refugees continued to arrive in Bangladesh and that the estimated number of refugees who had entered Bangladesh since 25 August exceeded 626,000. Welcoming the signing of the memorandum of understanding between Myanmar and Bangladesh, he urged all Myanmar leaders to adopt measures to defuse tensions and create an environment for the safe and dignified repatriation of refugees and internally displaced persons, including through interfaith initiatives. The Special Representative described her experiences during her visit to Rohingya refugees in camps in Bangladesh, where women and girls had reported that they had endured or witnessed sexual violence. She said that it was crucial that the safe return of the Rohingya people be accompanied by guarantees of basic security and rights. She urged the Security Council to demand a swift end to the violence, ensure that perpetrators were held accountable, create conditions for a safe and dignified future for survivors and ensure unhindered humanitarian access.

All members, as well as the representatives of Bangladesh and Myanmar under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, made statements in the Chamber. Council members welcomed the memorandum of understanding between Myanmar and Bangladesh and the commitment of Myanmar to implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State. Some speakers,

however, expressed concern at the continued violence and human rights violations and called for the perpetrators of crimes, including crimes of sexual violence, to be held accountable, as well as for unhindered access for humanitarian organizations.

At the closed consultations of the whole on the same day, in response to questions from some members, the Under-Secretary-General and representatives of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs explained the recent progress and challenges of accountability for human rights violations, the return of displaced persons and humanitarian conditions in Rakhine State and related areas.

Middle East and Asia

Afghanistan

The Security Council held a debate on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) on 21 December. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA, Tadamichi Yamamoto, gave a briefing. He highlighted the elections to be held in Afghanistan in 2018 and 2019, calling them critical for the future of the country.

Following the Special Representative's briefing, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Yuri Fedotov, informed the Council that there was evidence of links between organized crime and terrorist groups exploiting drug manufacturing and trafficking. He urged the Council to pay more attention to that issue.

The Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011), gave a brief summary of the Security Council's activities and encouraged the international community to implement the sanctions regime. This was followed by a statement by a founding member of the Women and Peace Studies Organization and a member of the High Peace Council of Afghanistan, Wazhma Frogh, who described the very difficult situation faced by women in Afghanistan.

All Security Council members spoke after the briefing. In addition, under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Germany, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan took the floor. The representative of the European Union spoke under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure.

On 28 December, the Security Council issued a press statement condemning a terrorist attack in Kabul by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant that took place on the same date, resulting in 40 people killed and 80 injured. While expressing sympathy, the Council reaffirmed that terrorism constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security.

Iraq

On 8 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2390 (2017), in which it concluded that all measures imposed by the Council in resolutions 1958 (2010) and 2335 (2016) pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations had been fully implemented by the parties. The United States took the floor after the adoption.

Lebanon

On 12 December, the Security Council discussed the situation in Lebanon at consultations of the whole under the item "Other matters" at the request of France. The French delegation gave a briefing on the outcomes of a ministerial meeting of the International Support Group for Lebanon held in Paris on 8 December. On 19 December, the Council issued a press statement welcoming the return of the Prime Minister, Saad Hariri, to Lebanon and taking note of the agenda set out in the final declaration of the International Support Group in support of Lebanon. The Council reaffirmed the need to protect Lebanon from crises in the region and called upon all Lebanese parties to implement a policy of disassociation from any external conflicts.

Syrian Arab Republic

On 5 December, consultations of the whole were held on the Syrian Arab Republic under the item entitled "Other matters" to discuss humanitarian cross-border assistance. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator gave a briefing. Security Council members shared the view that humanitarian assistance through the United Nations was vital.

On 7 December, the Security Council held consultations of the whole on chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, briefed the Council. Council members reiterated their condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and discussed how the Council could ensure accountability.

On 19 December, the Security Council adopted resolution 2393 (2017) in order to renew the authorization of humanitarian access across borders and conflict lines to the Syrian Arab Republic until 10 January 2019. The resolution was adopted by 12 votes in favour, with 3 abstentions.

Following the vote, briefings and consultations of the whole were held on the humanitarian and political situations in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, expressed his disappointment that the political process in Geneva had not made any headway.

The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator reported that the humanitarian situation was still dire in many places in the Syrian Arabic Republic and urged the Security Council to do everything to ensure that 2018 would bring some relief to people's suffering.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 8 December, a briefing on the item was held following the announcement by the President of the United States of America on 6 December that the United States recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and would move its embassy to that city from Tel Aviv. The Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nickolay Mladenov, reported that the position of the United Nations on the status of Jerusalem had not changed: it remained a final-status issue for which a comprehensive, just and lasting solution must be achieved through negotiations between the parties and on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions and other agreements. Expressing concern at the potential risk of a violent escalation, he called upon all parties to refrain from engaging in provocative actions and rhetoric.

The representative of the United States said that her country's actions were intended to advance the cause for peace, while emphasizing that the United States was not predetermining final-status issues and that the specific dimensions of sovereignty over Jerusalem were still to be decided by the Israelis and the Palestinians

through negotiations. Other members stressed the importance of the international consensus on the status of Jerusalem, including relevant Security Council resolutions. Many members expressed concern about the potential impact of the announcement on the situation on the ground. Under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, the representatives of Israel and Jordan took part in the meeting and made statements. The Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine to the United Nations also took part in the meeting and made a statement.

On 18 December, the Security Council held its monthly briefing and consultations on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Special Coordinator noted with regret that there had been no significant moves towards advancing peace and the parties were more divided than ever. He expressed concern over the growing risk that the parties might revert to more unilateral actions and noted that the situation had become more tense, with an increase in incidents in December. The United States, Uruguay and the Plurinational State of Bolivia took the floor after the Special Coordinator.

Following the informal consultations of the whole, a vote was held on the draft resolution on the status of Jerusalem (S/2017/1060). Fourteen members of the Security Council voted in favour, but the resolution was not adopted because a permanent member voted against it.

United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

On 12 December, a meeting with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was held, at which the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations gave a briefing.

On 14 December, the Security Council held consultations on UNDOF. The Assistant Secretary-General provided a briefing that was consistent with the report of the Secretary-General on UNDOF (S/2017/1024). Council members exchanged views on the situation on the ground and their assessment of the implementation of the UNDOF mandate, including the Force's plans to return to the area of separation as well as its technological requirements. The mandate renewal was also discussed. On 21 December, resolution 2394 (2017) was unanimously adopted, renewing the mandate of UNDOF until 30 June 2018.

Yemen

The Security Council held consultations of the whole on Yemen on 5 December. Briefings were given by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed. Council members stressed that there was no military solution for Yemen and that an inclusive, negotiated political settlement must be reached. Members expressed their concern about the humanitarian situation and underscored the need for safe, rapid, unhindered and sustained humanitarian and commercial access.

On 22 December, the Security Council issued a press statement condemning the ballistic missile attack by the Houthis against Riyadh on 19 December. The Council called upon all Member States to implement the existing arms embargo and for the parties in Yemen to work together for a peaceful resolution to the conflict without preconditions.

Thematic issues and other matters

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

On 6 December, the Security Council held its semi-annual debate to discuss the work of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, with the participation of the President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Carmel Agius, the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Theodor Meron, and the Prosecutor of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Serge Brammertz. The President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia said that judicial work had finished on 29 November and the Tribunal would close on 31 December, and that some of the Tribunal's work constituted points of no return that had forever changed the landscape of international justice. The President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals said that the work was ongoing and the fulfilment of the Residual Mechanism's mandate depended on support from the Council and Member States. The Prosecutor of the Residual Mechanism said that the expeditious conclusion of the trials and appeals transferred from the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia was a priority of his office. Croatia and Serbia also took the floor under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

Many Security Council members welcomed the accomplishments of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and called upon Member States to continue to offer support to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. There was criticism, however, that the Tribunal had been unable to become an impartial and independent body.

On 31 December, the Security Council issued a press statement on the closure of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The Council members stressed their ongoing determination to combat impunity for those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law and called upon all States to cooperate with the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, as set out in its Statute.

Maintenance of international peace and security

The Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2017/24) expressing grave concern about reports of migrants being sold into slavery in Libya. The Council strongly condemned such actions and called for investigations by all relevant authorities in order to bring the perpetrators to justice. The Council noted that the Government of National Accord of Libya had launched an investigation and committed itself to hold those responsible for these actions to account. The Council also underscored the need for coordination of efforts to tackle the root causes of large movements of people, including forced displacement, unmanaged migration and trafficking in persons, in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

Addressing complex contemporary challenges to international peace and security

On 20 December, the Security Council held an open debate to discuss how it could better address complex contemporary challenges to international peace and security. A total of 55 Member States and the European Union participated in the debate and shared their views on the issue.

The meeting started with a briefing by the Secretary-General, who noted that, while the world was seeing not only a quantitative but also a qualitative change in the nature of threats to international peace and security, efforts must be more coherent, coordinated and context-specific and work must be conducted across pillars and the peace continuum towards integrated action. He underlined his vision that prevention must be at the centre of everything the United Nations did. He also stressed that development was one of the best instruments of prevention, while respect for all human rights was an essential element. He expressed the view that gender perspectives and the concept of human security were useful tools in the context of prevention. He underscored the importance for the Security Council to be more systematic in preventing conflict and sustaining peace.

Participants acknowledged the emergence of complex contemporary challenges, many of which were cross-border in nature, and emphasized the increasing influence of more interlinked and mutually reinforcing threats. Participants underlined that the Security Council and other relevant United Nations bodies should take a more comprehensive and integrated approach to those challenges, taking into account that peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian elements were interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Participants stressed the importance of respect for the existing mandates of each United Nations organ, cooperation between the Council and other actors, better use of existing tools and the ongoing initiative of the Secretary-General to reform the peace and security architecture. Participants also affirmed the importance of continuing discussions, building upon the views expressed in the open debate.

Non-proliferation

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The Security Council held a ministerial-level briefing under the item "Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea" on 15 December. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Taro Kono, presided over the meeting. The Secretary-General referred to the situation on the Korean Peninsula as the most tense and dangerous peace and security issue in the world today, expressing his deep concern at the risk of military confrontation. He reiterated his call upon the leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with the relevant Council resolutions and allow space for the resumption of dialogue on denuclearization and sustainable peace on the Korean Peninsula. He also called for the immediate re-establishment and strengthening of communication channels and stressed that diplomatic engagement was the only pathway to sustainable peace and denuclearization. Council members exchanged views on how to stop the nuclear and missile development programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea took the floor under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

On 22 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2397 (2017) to tighten restrictions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including through the further restriction of fuel imports, trade with other countries and the ability of citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to work in foreign countries. In the resolution, the Council also reiterated its commitment to a peaceful, diplomatic and political solution to the situation. All Council members took the floor after the vote.

Islamic Republic of Iran

On 19 December, the Security Council held a briefing on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the

Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations, Sebastiano Cardi, in his capacity as the Council facilitator for the implementation of the resolution, and the Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Joanne Adamson, in her capacity as Coordinator of the Joint Commission established by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, addressed the Council.

All Security Council member States took the floor. The representative of Germany also spoke under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council.

United Nations peacekeeping operations

On 21 December, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2017/27) in which it expressed its intention to consider several elements related to peacebuilding and sustaining peace when reviewing the mandates and configuration of peacekeeping missions.

On the same day, the Security Council held a briefing to discuss United Nations peacekeeping operations, with a focus on force generation and gaps in capabilities. The Council heard from the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, who stated that the adoption of resolution 2378 (2017) had demonstrated the Council's strong commitment to strategic force generation and touched upon the recommendations on filling capability gaps made in accordance with that resolution, as described in the letter from the Secretary-General (S/2017/1079). Many Council members emphasized the importance of ensuring that peacekeepers were well trained and adequately equipped.

On 21 December, the Security Council issued a press statement in which it recognized the importance of considering and managing the environmental impact of peacekeeping operations mandated by the Council.

Small arms

On 18 December, the Security Council heard a briefing from the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, on the report of the Secretary-General on small arms and light weapons (S/2017/1025). She said that the human cost of the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms ran deep and underlined the importance of tackling illicit trade in small arms. She also said that small arms were key determinants in the lethality and longevity of conflicts and that to invest in the effective management of small arms and light weapons was to invest in conflict prevention.

All Security Council members spoke, stressing the threat constituted by the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons and reiterating the importance of addressing the issue at all governance levels. Many members also highlighted that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons was detrimental to efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Some delegations also shared their concern about the devastating impact on civilians of the use of small arms and light weapons and stressed that Governments should bear the primary responsibility of addressing the issue of small arms and light weapons.

Briefings by Chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council

On 8 December, the six outgoing non-permanent members (Egypt, Italy, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay) briefed the Council on the activities of the subsidiary bodies that they had chaired.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

On 21 December, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2395 (2017) to renew the mandate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate until December 2021. In the resolution, the Council highlighted the need for strong coordination between the Directorate and the recently established Office of Counter-Terrorism, headed by a new Under-Secretary-General. Egypt, the Russian Federation and the United States took the floor to make statements after the vote.

On the same day, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2396 (2017) to address the problem of foreign terrorist fighters, especially those returning to their countries of origin or nationality and those relocating to third countries. In the resolution, the Council decided that all Member States were required to use advance passenger information and passenger name record data to stop terrorist travel. Member States were also required to collect biometric data and develop watch lists of known and suspected terrorists, including foreign terrorist fighters. The Council called upon Member States to take appropriate action with regard to suspected terrorists and their accompanying family members entering their territories, including by considering appropriate prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration measures in compliance with domestic and international law. It also called upon Member States to notify other countries of the travel, arrival, deportation or detention of individuals who they had reasonable grounds to believe were terrorists. After the vote, some Council members made statements.